

Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White; and
Gov. George E. Pataki of New York.

The President's Radio Address

June 1, 2002

Good morning. It's graduation time on many college campuses. Members of my administration are traveling around the country to challenge the class of 2002 to make serving their neighbor and their Nation a central part of their lives. Earlier today I spoke to the graduating cadets of West Point, who will provide the ultimate service to our Nation as we fight and win the war on terror.

Americans have always believed in an ethic of service. Americans serve others because their conscience demands it, because their faith teaches it, because they are grateful to their country, and because service brings rewards much deeper than material success. Government does not create this idealism, but we can do a better job of supporting and encouraging an ethic of service in America.

During my State of the Union Address last January, I asked all Americans to give at least 2 years, or 4,000 hours over their lives, to serving others. And I created the USA Freedom Corps to help Americans find volunteer opportunities. Whatever your talent, whatever your background, each of you can do something.

America needs retired doctors and nurses who can be mobilized in emergencies, volunteers to help police and fire departments, and transportation and utility workers trained to spot danger. We have created a new Citizen Corps to enable Americans to make their own neighborhoods safer.

America needs citizens working to strengthen our communities. We need more talented teachers in our troubled schools and more mentors to love our children. Through the USA Freedom Corps

and the "Citizen Service Act" introduced in Congress just over a week ago, we will expand and improve the good efforts of AmeriCorps and Senior Corps to meet the needs of America's communities. I urge Congress to act quickly on this good piece of legislation. The USA Freedom Corps is also working with the nonprofits and hospitals, houses of worship, and schools around the country that offer millions of Americans the chance to serve others.

And America needs citizens to extend the compassion of our country to every part of the world, so we are renewing the promise of the Peace Corps, doubling its volunteers over the next 5 years, and asking it to expand its efforts to foster education and development in the Islamic world. We will fight resentment and hatred with hope and progress.

Americans from every walk of life are heeding the call to service. Since my State of the Union Address, more than 45,000 Americans have asked for Peace Corps applications. More than 34,000 citizens have signed up for the new Citizen Corps initiative. Applications for AmeriCorps and Senior Corps are also up.

And service knows no age requirement. You're never too old—or too young—to help out. One remarkable act of service came from 13-year-old Ashley Shamberger of Aloha, Oregon. A few months ago, Ashley wrote me a letter about the patriotic keychains she and her mom made and sold to raise money for the children of Afghanistan. She included a check for \$270.88 "to save more kids," as she put it. She did

all this while hospitalized with cancer. Tragically, Ashley died on the very day her letter reached the White House.

This is the character of our country. This is the soul of our people. This is the Nation we love and can honor through acts of service. If you'd like to find opportunities to serve your community, our country, or the world, as so many Americans already have, just contact usafreedomcorps.gov or call 1-877-USA-CORPS.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 10:35 a.m. on May 31 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 1. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on May 31 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks to the Community in Little Rock, Arkansas June 3, 2002

Thank you all. It's nice to be back in Arkansas. Thank you for that great hospitality. You know, when I was Governor, you used to let me come across the river sometimes—[*laughter*]*—that is, Governor of Texas—and it's good to be back. I'm so honored to be in this fine State with so many citizens. I'm here to give you kind of a sense about how things are going, at least from my perspective.*

Before I do, I want to thank Senator Hutchinson for his hard work on behalf of the people of Arkansas, and I want to thank him for his friendship. I appreciate so very much Senator Blanche Lincoln being here as well. Thank you for coming, Senator Lincoln; I'm honored to have you here. Congressman Boozman from up north is here. Thank you for being here, John. I'm glad you're here. I hope they're here to get some of this update and not because they want a free ride back to Washington. [*Laughter*] By the way, it's a nice way to travel, I want you to know.

I've known your Governor for a long time. I'm proud to call him friend. I'm really—I know you're grateful for the job he's doing as the Governor of this important State, and I want to thank him.

Mike's invited me to his church today; I'm going out there to talk about the need

to be compassionate for people who hurt. And I can't wait to go. Mike, I want to thank you for the invitation for—to give me a chance to herald the great faith that exists throughout our country and the importance of faith in the lives of our citizens and the importance of faith to make sure our Nation is as strong and as decent and as hopeful in every neighborhood as is conceivably possible.

And I appreciate Tommy Thompson traveling with us today. Tommy is the Secretary of Health and Human Services. He is a friend of mine as well. He's the former Governor of Wisconsin, who understands that welfare needs to help people help themselves. Tommy is doing a fantastic job as our Secretary of Health and Human Services.

Not on our traveling team is the most popular person in my family, the First Lady of the United States. [*Applause*] I know. The same thing happened to my dad. [*Laughter*] But Laura was recently here in Arkansas. She's talking about her passions of education and helping people. And when I asked her to marry me, she was a public school librarian in Texas, and she didn't particularly care for politicians or politics. And here she is, First Lady of the United